

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----025111 311823Z /42

R 311752Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8988
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USBERLIN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 09928

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MPOL, UR, GW, GE, SF, CH
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO FRG
FALIN: FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS; VISITS TO
BERLIN; U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS; CHINA

REF: BONN 9512

SUMMARY. CONVERSATION AT LUNCH MAY 31 WITH FALIN
PRODUCED NOTHING BASICALLY NEW ON RESULTS OF BREZHNEV'S
VISIT. FALIN STUCK TO STANDARD SOVIET POSITIONS CON-
CERNING PENDING FRG-SOVIET TREATIES HELD UP BECAUSE OF
BERLIN CLAUSE AND SHOWED NO SIGNS OF GIVE. HE DIS-
COURSED AT LENGTH ON SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO CHANCELLOR
AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF FRG ACCOMPANYING STATE VISITORS
TO WEST BERLIN -- IT SEEMS CLEAR FROM HIS REMARKS WE
CAN EXPECT PROTEST WHEN THESE OFFICIALS ACCOMPANY
PRESIDENT THERE.

THERE WAS LENGTHY EXCHANGE OF VIEWS CONCERNING
SITUATION IN AFRICA, WITH FALIN CLAIMING PRESENT
DIFFICULTIES COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IF BOTH SOVIETS
AND U.S. HAD BEEN WILLING TO CONSULT MORE FRANKLY

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AND OPENLY WITH EACH OTHER. HE EXPRESSED SERIOUS CON-
CERN ABOUT LEVEL OF MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS AND FEARED
THIS COULD LEAD TO DANGEROUS SITUATION. FALIN SHOWED
SENSITIVITY ON SUBJECT OF CHINA AND MADE FREQUENT
REFERENCES TO BRZEZINSKI'S "MEET THE PRESS" INTERVIEW.
END SUMMARY.

1. I LUNCHEd ALONE TODAY, MAY 31, AT HIS INVITATION WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO FRG FALIN. HE REVIEWED BREZHNEV'S VISIT IN FAMILIAR TERMS AND ADDED LITTLE THAT WAS NEW TO WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY REPORTED. HE APPEARED TO BE REASONABLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN USSR AND FRG IN FUTURE.

2. I QUESTIONED HIM IN SOME DETAIL ABOUT STATUS OF THREE TREATIES PENDING BETWEEN SOVIET UNION AND FRG WHICH ARE BEING HELD UP BY DIFFERENCES OVER BERLIN CLAUSE. FALIN ADHERED TO STANDARD SOVIET POSITIONS ON LATTER QUESTION, ASSERTING THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES COULD SOVIETS AGREE TO DEAL WITH TOP REPRESENTATIVES OF FRG INSTITUTES LOCATED IN WEST BERLIN. HE SEEMED TO FEEL THAT CHANCES OF ACHIEVING COMPROMISE ON THIS MATTER THROUGH FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS WERE SLIM AT BEST.

3. FALIN DISCOURSED AT LENGTH ABOUT SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO VISITS BY CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER TO WEST BERLIN TO ACCOMPANY STATE VISITORS, CITING IN PARTICULAR RECENT VISIT BY QUEEN ELIZABETH. ACCORDING TO FALIN, SOVIETS HAVE "POSITION OF PRINCIPLE" ON THIS SUBJECT, SINCE, IN THEIR VIEW, WHEN CHANCELLOR COMES TO BERLIN ON SUCH AN OCCASION HE IS, IN EFFECT,
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CARRYING OUT AN OFFICIAL ACT IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHANCELLOR, WHICH IS CONTRARY TO QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT. HE SAID THAT SOVIET UNION FEELS SUCH ACTIVITIES CONSTITUTE IRRITANT AND THAT THEY WILL BE PROTESTED BY SOVIETS WHENEVER THEY OCCUR.

4. I MADE CLEAR THAT WE DID NOT SHARE SOVIET VIEW IN THIS REGARD. CHANCELLOR AND OTHER TOP FRG OFFICIALS BY TRADITION HAVE ACCOMPANIED HIGH-RANKING FOREIGN VISITORS TO WEST BERLIN AS ACT OF COURTESY AND AS MANIFESTATION OF TIES BETWEEN FRG AND BERLIN (REFTEL). I EXPECTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD INVITE CHANCELLOR AND FOREIGN MINISTER TO ACCOMPANY HIM TO BERLIN WHEN HE VISITS IN JULY AND THAT THIS WOULD BE FULLY IN ACCORD WITH THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT. FALIN REMAINED UNCONVINCED AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE BELIEVES SOVIET PROTEST WILL BE FORTHCOMING IF CHANCELLOR ACCOMPANIES PRESIDENT.

5. A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF PRESENT STATE OF U.S.-

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8989
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USMISSION USBERLIN

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 09928

EXDIS

SOVIET RELATIONS PRODUCED LITTLE THAT WAS NOTEWORTHY. WHEN I CRITICIZED SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA AS WELL AS ACTIVITIES BY CUBAN FORCES AND SOVIET HELP GIVEN TO THE CUBANS, FALIN DID NOT DENY SUCH ACTIVITIES BUT EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE PRESENT PROBLEMS COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IF BOTH THE U.S. AND THE USSR HAD BEEN WILLING TO CONSULT EACH OTHER AT A HIGH LEVEL MORE FRANKLY AND OPENLY IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE PRESENT SITUATION. SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY ABOUT CUBANS IN RELATION TO THE SHABA INVASION, FALIN DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN "POSSIBLE" CUBAN ACTIONS IN GIVING REGULAR TRAINING TO FORCES IN ANGOLA AND ASSISTING THEM IN CARRYING OUT INVASION OF NEIGHBORING TERRITORY. HE DENIED THAT CUBANS HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH LATTER AND FLATLY STATED HIS BELIEF THAT FRENCH WERE BEHIND THE INVASION.

6. FALIN EXPRESSED HIS GRAVE CONCERN ABOUT THE EXTENT OF PUBLIC RECRIMINATION AT PRESENT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION AND FEARED THIS COULD LEAD TO A DANGEROUS SITUATION FROM WHICH IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR EITHER SIDE TO EXTRICATE ITSELF.

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7. FALIN DISPLAYED CONSIDERABLE SENSITIVITY ON SUBJECT OF CHINA AND AT SEVERAL POINTS QUOTED SPECIFICALLY FROM BRZEZINSKI'S RECENT "MEET THE PRESS" INTERVIEW IN CONNECTION WITH HIS REMARKS ON U.S.-CHINESE RELATIONS. FALIN AGREED THAT CHINA WAS INTERESTED IN MODERNIZING ITSELF, BUT SAID ITS TOP PRIORITY BY FAR WAS IN THE FIELD OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND PRODUCTION. HE STATED, MOREOVER, THAT, ACCORDING TO SOVIET SOURCES, THE PRIMARY CHINESE EFFORT IN THE MILITARY FIELD IS BEING DEVOTED TO NUCLEAR WEAPON DEVELOPMENT.

8. FALIN CONFIRMED THAT HE EXPECTED TO BE TRANSFERRED BACK TO MOSCOW TO ANOTHER POSITION WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. (THIS HAS LONG BEEN RUMORED AND FALIN APPEARS SINCERELY TO WANT SUCH A CHANGE.) HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT HIS ASSIGNMENT WOULD BE IN MOSCOW.
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